C!N
1084
House of Mystery

Men of Mystery

According to the news media, the housing market is in trouble—but *Bill Willingham & Matthew Sturges* are convinced that this spring is the perfect time to construct an all-new house—a multi-story house, in fact!

The house that these to writers are building is a ***House of Mystery***—and they're not building it alone. Not only are they enlisting the aid of primary artist *Luca Rossi* and cover artist *Sam Weber*, but they'll also utilize the talents of *Bernie Wrightson*, *Jill Thompson*, and others.

The new ***House of Mystery*** will have little in common with the horror anthology launched by DC back in the early 1950s and revamped by editor *Joe Orlando* in forty years ago. Rather than a standard multi-tale anthology book, this new ***House of Mystery*** will combine standalone tales with a recurring storyline and a regular cast of characters who will function as both residents of this mysterious house and tellers of its tales.

Willingham and Sturges intend to apply the same type of world-building to the ongoing mysteries in the new title as they do in ***Jack of Fables***. But they're not throwing out everything that made the old title so distinctive. Among other things, the house featured in the title will be quite familiar to readers of the original series and the recent ***Showcase Presents House of Mystery*** volumes—and so will one of its occupants. "It is in fact the same exact house," Sturges told *Vaneta Rogers*, "and one of the things you see at the very beginning of the story is that Cain, who has up until now been the proprietor of the house from the original ***House of Mystery*** series, and also appeared as a recurring character in ***Sandman***, comes out of his brother Abel's house, the House of Secrets, to find that *his* house has disappeared, then he exclaims, 'Blood of the gods! Somebody's stolen my house!' That's the beginning of the series, and what has happened to the house is the major mystery of the first part of the series."

"We both read the old ***House of Mystery***," Willingham added. "One of the nice things about this particular time in comics is they're reprinting the old ***House of Mystery*** in those giant ***Showcase*** phone book things, which meant we both got to delve back into the earliest ***House of Mystery*** stories. So yeah, that did indeed inspire and inform the new series.

"The premise of the ***House of Mystery*** is that there are five people who seem to be trapped in the house—they cannot leave at all—and they don't know why. When they attempt to leave, they find out that their ability to leave the house is gone. To make up for this, the house provides them with the things they need, like food and, of course, liquor—because *everyone* has to have liquor.

"But the five cannot leave—however other folks can come and go as they will, which only adds to the consternation of the five characters. It's like, how come these guys get to go and we can't? Being clever people, they think, 'well, we're going to use what we have to make some kind of life for ourselves.' And since the house provides all the free food and drink they need, they open a bar and restaurant for all those folks who come and go.

"What the house *won't* provide or allow for, though, is any type of outside news or entertainment. No TV, no books, no journals—nothing like that. And so they decide, well, since money's no good to us, we're going to charge stories from the people who come and go for our hospitality so that we don't go crazy living here all alone in this house for an eternity."

Don't think of this as just a routine frame-story anthology, however. "This thing works on two levels," Sturges explained. "In each issue, there's a story that is told by a patron of the bar in exchange for their food and drink. So, within each issue, you get one complete story that will be illustrated by a different artist each time. And those will be complete in that they will have a beginning, middle and end right there in that issue.

"The overall story—the major arcs in the book—have longer-lasting mysteries. But the promise we make to the reader is that each of these mysteries will have an actual resolution and we know what that resolution is. And it will be provided to the reader in a timely manner. So there's not going to be this sort of endless chain of mysteries that don't make any sense and won't ever resolve.

"One of the things we wanted to make sure of when we started the book was that *each mystery had an answer*. So we'll see, over the course of the series, these mysteries get resolved one by one and new mysteries arising from those resolutions. So hopefully, this will be something to keep people going for a long time." And of course, one of the first mysteries that must be solved is why these five are trapped in the house.

So who are these five souls who can check out any time they like, but can never leave? "The main character of the first arc is a young lady by the name of Fig Keele, who is an architecture student at the University of Texas at Austin—which is a complete coincidence of the fact that I went to the University of Texas at Austin," Sturges said. "And she is the latest person to find herself drawn to this house, and the first story tells us about her experiences finding that house and discovering that she herself is one of those who is unable to leave. But she is unique among the people who have become trapped in the house for reasons that I can't tell you because they're mysteries.

"We have a bartender named Harry Bailey... and we've a character named The Poet, who's also a little bit of a mysterious figure. He comes from an alternate 19th century France who was a celebrated poet among other things. We find out much later that he's also handy with a rapier, but that's a whole other story.

"We also have the bouncer of the bar, who is there in case anything gets out of hand. And she's a lady pirate by the name of Ann Preston, who is one of the most renowned and feared pirate captains from her home world—about which we will learn quite a bit when we get her back story.

"The fifth character is the waitress, Cress, who is one of the best waitresses who ever lived. We learn pretty quickly that she and Harry have a history together... and this history is not a particularly good one."

Since, as was previously mentioned, Cain has some history in ***Sandman***, is it possible that this series will interact with other Vertigo titles? "It appears ripped away from the sort of Sandman 'continuity' on the first page of the book. So there is some kind of metaphorical separation happening there," Sturges said. "It's not to say none of those Vertigo characters will ever be referenced or mentioned or maybe seen in the background somewhere—but that's not really the point of what we're trying to do."

So does the house exist in another reality, or is a sort of reality nexus? "That's a really good question," Sturges said. "It exists in a crossroads between many worlds. And so you can get there from a lot of different places—not just our world but other worlds as well. Many different kinds of worlds at many different times and many different types of places."

One of the primary creative advantages of this story structure is that it offers the writers almost infinite possibilities. "We're going to see a lot of different kinds of stories," Sturges said. "One of the things we really wanted to do with this was create—well, Bill used the phrase 'a story-telling machine,' wherein we could justify telling as many different types of stories as we could possibly get away with.... Anything we want to. So anything from classic horror story, which is what is kind of what's in the first issue, to something kind of silly and foolish, to a story about gangsters, to a story about spacemen from a 1950s visualization of what the future is like, to psychic detectives in 19th century London ... and the list goes on."

The primary artist of the framing sequences and the over-arcing storyline is *Luca Rossi*. "Luca is an Italian artist who doesn't speak a word of English," Sturges said. "Fortunately, our editor, *Angela Rufino*, speaks fluent Italian... This is his first American work in comics, and he's a really wonderful artist and I think people are going to be pleased with his work.

"The stories that are told by the bar's patrons are each told by a different artist. So far, the ones that we've got lined up that we know for sure are *Jill Thompson*, who's in issue #1, and *Bernie Wrightson*, who's in issue #3, and issue #1 is drawn by *Ross Campbell*. And we have others in the queue who we aren't allowed to mention because DC will not have us using names until they've locked themselves in and said they are definitely doing that—but there are some pretty exciting names!"

Willingham explained his involvement in the series, beyond co-creating the concept with Sturges. "I am writing the first five inset stories," Willingham said ("You're writing *at the bare minimum*, the first five stories," Sturges corrected). Beyond that, "It's Matt's book. He's writing it. The big important thing each issue is what he's calling the 'framing sequence,' but we should probably find a better word for that because it's *not* just a framing sequence; the bulk of every issue is the ongoing story. And that's all Matt. Granted, I throw in ideas where they occur to me or where he allows them."

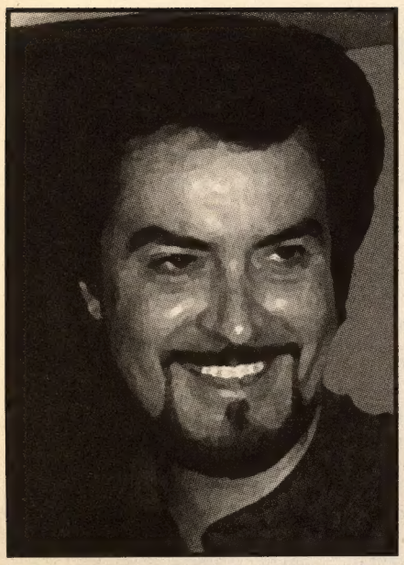
The house party begins on May 7th with the release of ***House of Mystery #1***, a $2.99 comic published under DC's Vertigo imprint.

by Vaneta Rogers (with Cliff Biggers)

Courtesy your friendly neighborhood comics outlet!

Comic Shop Newsarama

Produced by Comic Shop News in cooperation with Matt Brady and newsarama.com



Dave Stevens Passes

Acclaimed artist/writer *Dave Stevens*, the man responsible for the fan-favorite pulp-styled comic series ***The Rocketeer***, passed away on March 10th due to complications related to leukemia, which he has battled for many years. The 52-year-old Stevens first rocketed into the spotlight with his stylish period-piece starring an intrepid rocket-pack-wearing hero and his Bettie-Page-lookalike girlfriend; one of the highlights of the series was a storyline featuring a barely-modified Doc Savage and crew.

Stevens began his comics career in 1975 as an inker on *Russ Manning's* ***Tarzan*** strip, but he became a star when he launched ***The Rocketeer*** as a backup feature in *Mike Grell's* ***Starslayer*** in 1982. While his comic book storytelling page-count was far more minimal than his fans would have liked, his covers were the highlight of many comics over the years.

Publisher
Comic Shop News, Inc.

Editors
Cliff Biggers
Ward Batty

©2007 Comic Shop News, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Editorial Office
2770 Carillon Crossing
Marietta, GA 30066
fax (928) 441-5990
cliffbig@comicshopnews.com

Business Office
3577-A Chamblee-Tucker Rd. #215
Atlanta, GA 30341
(770) 939-1364
fax (678) 669-1525
wbatty@csnsider.com
www.csnsider.com

Spike's Back in Circulation!

Buffy got her chance to return in a Season Eight comic book series; Angel got his comic book shot at Season Five; heck, even *Joss Whedon's* ***Serenity*** gets a new comic book series. So what about everyone's favorite Whedon-created Brit-vampire?

Good news, Spike fans: the fanged anti-hero gets a story of his own in the four-part ***Spike: After the Fall***, slated to launch this summer courtesy of IDW (publishers of ***Angel: After the Fall***).

While the character has appeared in ***Angel: After the Fall***, there were certainly some questions left unanswered. Those questions are the focus of the miniseries by *Brian Lynch & Franco Urru*.

So how does it all fit into continuity? Well, ***Angel: After the Fall #6, #7 & #8*** tell stories of how the cast of characters was affected by the fight in the alley that ended the series. Issue #6 will feature Spike, Connor and Lorne; issue #7 will feature Wesley and a surprise return of a character from the Whedonverse; while issue #8 will feature Gwen, the effect of LA being thrust into hell on the city's residents, and the fate of Gunn. Issue #9 will pick up from the cliffhanger at the end of issue #5, and will feature the new art team of *Nick Runge & Art Lyon*. #8 and #9 will both ship in June.

As for ***Spike: After the Fall***—well, it will spin out of the "First Night" events seen in ***Angel: After the Fall*** and events in issue #7, and tells of Spike's first few months in hell and co-stars Illyria.

Look for ***Spike: After the Fall #1*** in July.

Coming Comics—Dark Horse in June

Coinciding with his appearance in the upcoming film ***Hellboy II: The Golden Army***, Johan Krauss also stars in ***BPRD: The Ectoplasmic Man***, a oneshot by *Mike Mignola, John Arcudi, & Ben Stenbeck* that presents the origin of one of the most peculiar members of the remarkable Bureau for Paranormal Research and Defense.

It's a BPRD month as writer *Mike Mignola* enlists the aid of veteran artist *Herb Trimpe* in ***BPRD: War on Frogs #1***, the first of four oneshots set before the events of ***The Black Flame***. As the frog cult spreads across America, Roger the Homunculus returns to the site of the B.P.R.D.'s first clash with the frog creatures— the ruins of Cavendish Hall, where Hellboy, Abe, and Liz first encountered both the frogs and Rasputin— to track down the final pieces of the puzzle of the Cavendish family.

Will Eisner's intrepid hero makes another foray into the third dimension with the release of the *Tony Cipriano*-sculpted ***Classic Spirit Statue***, a 13" piece that depicts Denny Colt on the run towards (or is it away from?) a crime on the tracks.

Timothy Truman & Tomas Giorello launch the next phase of Conan's life in ***Conan the Cimmerian #0***, a 99¢ comic featuring an adaptation of *Robert E. Howard's* poem "Cimmeria."

Scott Adams' silly look at the sisyphusian nature of office life comes to Dark Horse with the release of the ***Dilbert PVC Set***, featuring a half-dozen characters from the comic strip, all packaged in a box designed to resemble an office cubicle.

Artist *Tony Moore* rejoins writer *Rick Remender* with ***Fear Agent #22***, the first installment of a six-part arc. After being shot through the other side of a black hole, Heath Huston finds himself in a shadow universe marooned on the desolate planet Westx, a world populated by gun-slinging robots, venomous mutants, and buxom cowgirls.

Scott Meyer sets out to make your life easier (or is he?) with ***Help Is On the Way: A Collection of Basic Instructions***, a 120-page volume that will teach you (in a rather unhelpful way) how to deal with some of the problems that life throws at you. Some of the best strips from the online webcomic ***Basic Instructions*** see print in this irresistible bad-advice volume.

Shane O'Shea & Ogden Whitney's cult classic lollipop-licking hero returns in ***Herbie Archives Volume 1***, a 224-page hardcover reprinting the earliest appearances of the unlikely fat hero Herbie Popnecker.

Dr. Henry Jones Jr. is back in action in ***Indiana Jones & the Tomb of the Gods***, a new series by *Rob Williams & Steve Scott* that features all the usual trappings: globe-hopping adventure, archeological wonders, strange artifacts, and evil Nazis.

Vector, the year-long millennia-spanning ***Star Wars*** crossover saga, continues in ***Star Wars: Dark times #12***, as Darth Vader confronts the legacy of the ancient Sith—and the ancient Jedi.

The best Luke Skywalker tales from more than thirty years of comics are assembled in the hefty, oversized ***Star Wars: Luke Skywalker, Last Hope for the Galaxy—From Tatooine to Dark Empire*** (hey, could we make that title a *little* longer, guys?..). From his earliest Marvel exploits to his most recent Dark Horse adventures, Luke's best is included in this 800-page edition.

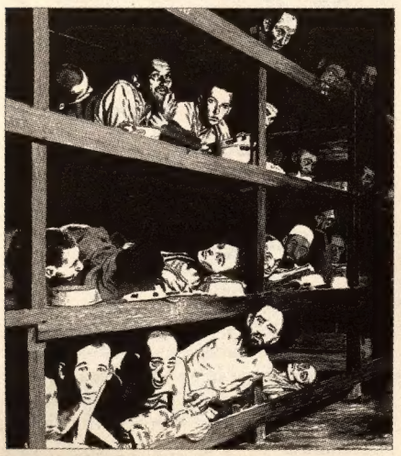
Dark Horse collected editions (advance solicited for August release) include:

- ***Appleseed Book 3: The Scales of Prometheus***, presenting *Masamune Shirow's* graphic novel in the original right-to-left format;
- ***Buffy the Vampire Slayer Omnibus Volume 5***, a 352 -page volume that collects ***:Haunted, Blood of Carthage, Autumnal, Oz***, and other short tales;
- ***Lobster Johnson Volume 1: The Iron Prometheus***, collecting the five-part limited series, along with a sketchbook and The Secret History of Lobster Johnson;
- ***The Mask Omnibus Volume One***, collecting ***The Mask, The Mask Returns***, and ***The Mask Strikes Back***, all by *John Arcudi & Doug Mahnke*;
- ***Star Wars: Dark Times Volume 2***, collecting ***Dark Times #s 6-10***; and
- ***X Omnibus Volume 2***, collecting X #s 12-25, along with "Someone to Watch Over Me" from ***Dark Horse Extra #s 28-31.***

A Moving Look at Past Horrors

A few months ago, we told ***CSN*** readers that ***Cerebus*** creator *Dave Sim* was working on *two* secret projects. One of them, ***Glamourpuss***, we told you about a few issues ago; the other we can tell you about now. The work is ***Judenhass***, a standalone

graphic novel that offers a moving look at the Holocaust.



From the desk of Lou Copeland:

Dear friends,

"The project, ***Judenhass***, is a personal reflection on The Holocaust in the form of a 56 page graphic novel," collaborator *Lou Copeland* wrote on Sim's blog. "Begun in response to the sixtieth anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz (2005) it will be released during the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of Israel this May.

"Over the past two years I've been doing the layout of the 56 page book per Dave's specs, assisting Dave with research, and creating the website with input and content from Dave... In my opinion Judenhass is a powerful, moving, and meaningful experience. I couldn't be prouder of being able to assist one of the persons I admire the most in bringing it into this world."

"I decided some time ago that the term anti-Semitism (a 'coined' term of late nineteenth century origin) is completely inadequate to the abhorrent cultural phenomenon which it attempts to describe," sim wrote. "For one thing, Arabs are Semites as well, and the prejudice as it is generally understood certainly doesn't apply equally to Arabs and Jews.

"It was in the early stages of researching this graphic narrative that I first encountered the German term *Judenhass*—literally, *Jew hatred*. It seemed to me that the term served to distill the ancient problem to its essence, and in such a way as to hopefully allow other non-Jews (like myself) to see the problem 'unlaundered' and through fresh eyes. Europe and various other jurisdictions aren't experiencing a sudden upsurge in 'anti-Semitism.' What they are experiencing is an upsurge in *Judenhass. Jew hatred.* So that's what I've chosen to call this story," Sim explained.

Judenhass is scheduled for May release.

CSNsider

•A lot of comic book talent negotiations take place in seclusion, but artist *Chris Weston* is going very public with his ambitions for his next project. On his blog, the talented artist currently working with *J. Michael Straczynski* on ***The Twelve*** made it very clear what he'd like to do next!

"In a recent interview with ***Newsarama***," Weston wrote, *Grant Morrison* said, 'After that, there's been some talk about doing three two-part ***All Star Superman*** specials with some unusual artists who've never drawn the character before.'

"An unusual artist who has never drawn the character before. Hmmmmm. Uh, Grant... can you think of anyone who could possibly fit that bill?

"It's me, Grant, *ME*!!!!!!!

"C'mon, you know it makes sense!"

And we couldn't agree more—particularly when we take a peek at the Superman image that Weston supplied to accompany his very public pitch!

•More back-to-press books at Marvel, including ***Kick-Ass #1, Ultimates 3 #3, X-Force #2, Hulk #2, Cable #1,*** and ***The Twelve #3;*** look for 'em in early April, each with variant covers.

•Marvel has added two new incentive variants for ***Secret Invasion #1:*** the first is a 1-for-50 variant by *Leinil Francis Yu*, the other is a 1-for-75 sketch variant featuring *Steve McNiven's* pencilled cover art.

•*David Finch* supplies the art for a 1-for-20 incentive variant cover for ***Ultimates 3 #4,*** in stores in late April.

•*Terry Dodson* does the honors on the 1-for-15 variant cover for ***Ms. Marvel #25,*** in stores this week.

•*Marko Djurdjevic* supplies the art for the 1-for-50 variant incentive cover for ***Uncanny X-Men #497,*** in stores in late April.

•Marvel continues the "bloody variant" trend with ***X-Force #3,*** which will feature a more sanguinary version of the standard cover image; this is *not* an incentive cover, so it's available in whatever quantities your friendly local comic shop chooses to stock.

•The black-and-white variant version of *Brian K. Vaughan & Eduardo Risso's* ***Logan #1*** was so well received that Marvel intends to offer black and white variants of every issue in the series. These are not limited, so you can choose the version you prefer!

•*Art Adams* is supplying the 50/50 variant cover for *Todd Dezago & Craig Rousseau's* ***Perhapanauts #1***—and here's your chance to see just what a gem of a cover it is! Look for the book in mid-April.

•According to *Joe Quesada*, a ***Deadpool*** solo project is in the works.

•*Darwyn Cooke*, who said he has always wanted to work on a Western, is teaming with writers *Jimmy Palmiotti & Justin Gray* on a ***Jonah Hex*** story; no word on when it might be scheduled.

•Is it true? Has IDW landed the ***GI Joe*** license? While the publisher hasn't confirmed that report for ***CSN*** as of press-time, Devil's Due publisher *Joss Blaylock* did confirm that his company no longer has the ***Joe*** license.

•To fill in the gap in their schedule, Devil's Due is working on more ***Voltron*** material, including a new story, ***Legend Forged,*** that will chronicle the origin of the Voltron armor.

•***Dungeons & Dragons*** creator *Gary Gygax* died on March 4th at the age of 69. While Gygax was not actively involved in comics, his role-playing game has directly inspired several comic book series and has indirectly inspired the creation of scores of fantasy comics, as well as the fantasy gaming genre.

•*Uh oh!* Some pages were accidentally swapped in the early-March-release ***Showcase Presents Superman Family Volume 2 TP;*** DC is aware of the problem, and is going to press with a replacement printing that corrects the goofup. It'll be easy to tell which is which: the mistake edition has a red and yellow logo, while the corrected edition will have a red and white logo. If you got one of the bad ones, just wait 'til early April, when the new version is released, and bring your faulty copy back to the store where you bought it for a no-cost exchange!

•***Salvation Run #7,*** the final issue to the *Matthew Sturges-Sean Chen-Walden Wong* miniseries, has grown in the telling; it'll now weigh in at 40 pages, with a cover price of $3.50. They're also adding a variant cover by *Neal Adams.*

•***Trials of Shazam #12*** has also expanded from 32 to 40 pages and will carry a $3.50 cover price. (That's 16% more money for 33% more story, which isn't too bad a deal!)

•Now *here's* the sort of bargain that comic fans hear about all too rarely: DC has cut the price in half on the upcoming ***Batman: Death Mask*** series by manga creator *Yoshinori Natsume.* Originally announced at $5.99, the book will be released at only $2.99 per issue. The story focuses on a new serial killer in Gotham—one who may have ties to the training Bruce Wayne received as a young man in Japan. Is it possible that the killer knows who Batman really is? That's the question that Natsume answers in this two-part series.

•*Vince Letterio* has been promoted to Director—Direct Sales at DC Comics. A former retailer who has been with DC for sixteen years, Letterio works with comic shops and Diamond Distribution, smoothing the process of getting the books and products you want into your shop!

•Artist *Jo Chen* returns as cover artist of ***Buffy the Vampire Slayer*** in July—and on her blog, she offered a sneak peek at the cover image for ***Buffy #16,*** written by *Joss Whedon.* And yes, that *is* Fray, the star of the Whedon-written future-slayer series published several years ago, who's engaged in gravity-fed combat with Buffy on the cover. Now *that's* the sort of story that will have fans talking for months to come!

•Desperado Publishing has landed the rights to release ***Monsterpocalypse,*** a comic book miniseries produced by Across the Pond Studios based on the collectible miniature game by Privateer Press. The three-parter will debut in September; those who purchase all three issues will be eligible to receive a limited edition ***Monsterpocalypse*** figure.

"The opportunity to work with Across the Pond Studios on this comic series is a thrill," Privateer Press creative director *Matt Wilson* said. "Every day, I'm seeing the fruits of their efforts, and it's fantastic. Across the Pond is capturing all of the dynamic action of this giant fighting monster setting and weaving an engaging story into all of it that is sure to please the readers. Between this comic series and the Monsterpocalypse game, fans of giant monsters will have a lot to look forward to this fall." The series will be written by *Stephan Nilson & Jason Avery,* with art by *Karl Waller & Rick Bonilla.*

Top Comics for

BATMAN #676

Grant Morrison (W); Tony Daniel & Sandu Florea (A)

(DC FEB080199 $2.99)

What's the Scoop?

Someone's not gonna make it... but who? Well, the title *is* "Batman R.I.P."...

Why Should You Care?

Grant Morrison launches the major Batman event he's been building up to for months—and you know that guarantees this one will be very read-worthy!

BATMAN: DEATH MASK #1 (OF 4)

Yoshinori Natsume (W/A)

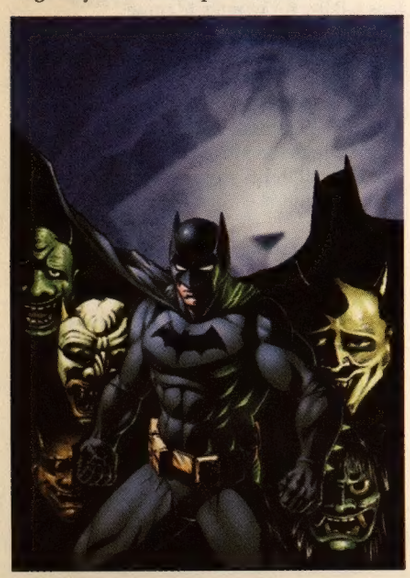
(DC FEB080205 $2.99)

What's the Scoop?

A Gotham serial killer seems to have a strange connection to Bruce Wayne's Japanese training... so does that mean that he knows the Batman's secret identity?

Why Should You Care?

Acclaimed manga creator *Yoshinori Natsume* presents an original Bat-manga—and to make it even more accessible, DC has cut its originally-announced price in half!



CAPTAIN ACTION #0

Fabian Nicieza (W); Mark Sparacio (A)

(Moonstone FEB083901 $1.99)

What's the Scoop?

He began his career as an action figure that could be transformed into a number of high-profile heroes—but now he's back for the 21st Century as a super spy master of disguise!

Why Should You Care?

Fabian Nicieza reinvents a nostalgic favorite, giving him a new origin, an intriguing backstory, and a bright future as a comic book hero.

COUNTDOWN TO FINAL CRISIS 4

Paul Dini & others (W); Keith Giffen & others (A)

(DC FEB080177 $2.99)

COUNTDOWN TO FINAL CRISIS 3

Paul Dini & others (W); Keith Giffen & others (A)

(DC FEB080178 $2.99)

COUNTDOWN TO FINAL CRISIS 2

Paul Dini & others (W); Keith Giffen & others (A)

(DC FEB080179 $2.99)

COUNTDOWN TO FINAL CRISIS 1

Paul Dini & others (W); Keith Giffen & others (A)

(DC FEB080180 $2.99)

What's the Scoop?

With the Great Disaster as a backdrop, all of ***Countdown to Final Crisis***'s storylines come to a dramatic climax... and what happens here will pave the way for the biggest crossover event of the year.

Why Should You Care?

After a slow start, ***Countdown to Final Crisis*** has become a must-read for DC fans—and anyone who's ever sampled an issue will want to see how the series wraps up!

DC UNIVERSE ZERO

Grant Morrison & Geoff Johns (W); George Perez, Tony Daniel, J.G. Jones, Aaron Lopresti, Ivan Reis, Philip Tan, & Carlos Pacheco (A)

(DC MAR080123 50¢)

What's the Scoop?

Everything leading into ***Final Crisis***—and many other 2008 DC events—can be found in the pages of this original bargain-priced oneshot!

Why Should You Care?

For four bits, you can get original material from a veritable who's who of DC talent—how can you *not* care?

DC/WILDSTORM: DREAM WAR #1 (OF 6)

Keith Giffen (W); Lee Garbett & Trevor Scott (A)

(DC FEB080184 $2.99)

When DC heroes appear in the Wildstorm universe, are they the world's salvation... or the source of its destruction?

What's the Scoop?

The Earth is being torn apart—and it looks like it might be related to the surprise appearance of DC heroes in the Wildstorm Universe. Unfortunately, the Justice League has no idea how they got here... or how to get back!

Why Should You Care?

Keith Giffen kicks off a major crossover storyline that *doesn't* tie in to the whole 52 multiverses concept—and seeing just how he pulls that off is reason enough to check out this six-part crossover series.

FRANK FRAZETTA'S DARK KINGDOM

Mark Kidwell (W); Tim Vigil & Jay Fotos (A)

(Image FEB082115 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

Meet sea raider Red Morden, who battles his way through an ocean of horror to save his threatened family.

Why Should You Care?

The art of legendary illustrator *Frank Frazetta* is the inspiration for this brutal heroic fantasy tale illustrated by fan-favorite *Tim Vigil*.

GEORGE R R MARTIN'S WILD CARDS: HARD CALL #1

George R.R. Martin & Daniel Abraham (W); Eric Battle (A)

(Dabel Bros FEB083655 $2.99)

What's the Scoop?

In a world in which a lucky few have gained incredible superheroes, one of those lucky "aces" finds himself framed for the murder of a young nurse... but he soon discovers that the real killer is another ace with incredible abilities.

Why Should You Care?

The Dabel Brothers launch their own self-publishing venture with this original series featuring characters from Martin's stories, along with a new generation of aces and jokers. You saw what they did with ***Anita Blake, Vampire Hunter...*** wait 'til you see what they have in the works now!

GIANT SIZE ASTONISHING X-MEN #1

Joss Whedon (W); John Cassaday (A)

(Marvel DEC072218 $4.99)

What's the Scoop?

Can the X-Men stop the powerlords of Breakworld from destroying the Earth? And which X-Man will fall during the struggle? Find out in this extra-length finale!

April

Why Should You Care?

Joss Whedon & John Cassaday say farewell to ***Astonishing X-Men*** with this issue—but they promise to go out with a bang!

GLAMOURPUSS #1

Dave Sim (W/A)

(Aardvark-Vanaheim FEB083391 $3.00)

What's the Scoop?

Part social satire, part comic book commentary—***Glamourpuss*** is one of the boldest comics experiments in years!

Why Should You Care?

Dave Sim, who made comics history with ***Cerebus***, takes readers in an all-new direction with this "comics blog" that blends a love for classic comics art with innovative experimentation.

JIM BUTCHER'S DRESDEN FILES: WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE #1

Jim Butcher (W); Adrian Syaif (A)

(Dabel Bros FEB083657 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

What appears to be a routine zoo mauling accident is actually something much more sinister... and of course, that's why Harry Dresden is involved—and why he's next on the victims list!

Why Should You Care?

Fan-favorite occult detective Harry Dresden makes his comics debut courtesy of novelist/creator *Jim Butcher*, who does the scripting honors for this original limited series.

MACK BOLAN--THE EXECUTIONER: DEVIL'S TOOLS #1 (OF 5)

Doug Wojtowicz (W); S.L. Gallant (A)

(IDW FEB083807 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

The mob, the KGB, terrorists... Mack Bolan has taken them all on during his lengthy career. And now he'll take them all on again in this five-issue limited series!

Why Should You Care?

The antihero who inspired the Punisher is back in an original miniseries written by *Doug Wojtowicz*, author of dozens of ***Executioner*** novels (so you can be sure that he knows his subject!).

PERHAPANAUTS #1

Todd Dezago (W); Craig Rousseau (A)

(Image FEB082114 $3.50)

What's the Scoop?

The paranormal superteam heads to the Bermuda Triangle to rescue Karl from the Mothman Tribunal. Sounds weird? That's 'cuz it *is*...

Why Should You Care?

Todd Dezago & Craig Rousseau take their cult favorite series to its new home at Image—and wait 'til you see the *Art Adams* variant cover for the first issue!

SECRET INVASION #1 (OF 8)

Brian Bendis (W); Leinil Francis Yu (A)

(Marvel FEB082240 $3.99; also available in a signed edition (FEB083730 $29.99))

What's the Scoop?

For years, the Skrulls have been infiltrating every super-powered organization in the Marvelverse. Now it's time to unleash their invasion plans—and that means one shocking revelation after another as the truth comes out regarding the enemy among us!

Why Should You Care?

Brian Bendis turns the paranoia factor up to eleven in this "who can you trust?" limited series that promises to shake up the Marvel Universe in an unprecedented way.

STAR TREK: YEAR FOUR—ENTERPRISE EXPERIMENT #1

D.C. Fontana & Derek Chester (W); Gordon Purcell (A)

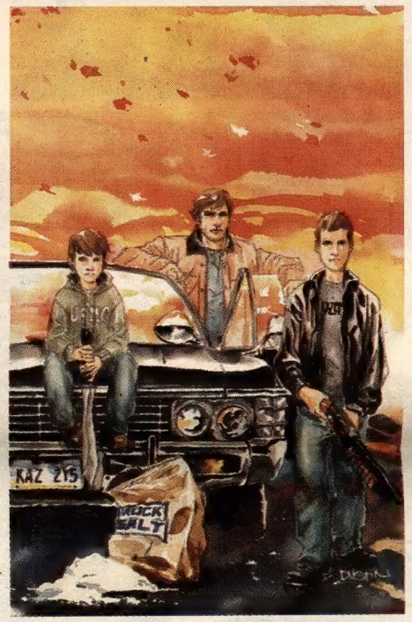
(IDW FEB083809 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

Kicking off a sequel to the classic episode "The Enterprise Incident," in which the Enterprise finds itself crippled and out of phase in a cloaking experiment gone haywire... and that makes them sitting ducks for a Romulan assault!

Why Should You Care?

This limited series marks the comics debut of D.C. Fontana, acclaimed writer of the original ***Star Trek*** series and the animated series, who does the honors on this sequel to one of her most popular original episodes.



SUPERNATURAL: RISING SON #1 (OF 6)

Peter Johnston & Rebecca Dessertine (W); Diego Olmos (A)

(WildStorm/DC FEB080285 $2.99)

What's the Scoop?

Witness the young Winchester brothers' first experiences in demon-hunting in this original series that picks up several years after ***Supernatural: Origins*** and several years prior to the events of the popular WB limited series.

Why Should You Care?

This is the only place where fans of the television series can find the backstory of the Winchester family—and once word gets out, expect to see plenty of TV series fans making a trek to comic shops to latch onto this series!

THOR: AGES OF THUNDER

Matt Fraction (W); Patrick Zircher (A)

(Marvel FEB082257 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

Witness the triumphs and tragedies that have befallen Thor's immortal life in this extra-length special.

Why Should You Care?

This is a convenient way for a lot of newly-converted ***Thor*** fans to learn about the God of Thunder's backstory—and a great way for veteran fans to re-experience the God of Thunder's multi-storied past.

TITANS #1

Judd Winick (W); Ian Churchill & Norm Rapmund (A)

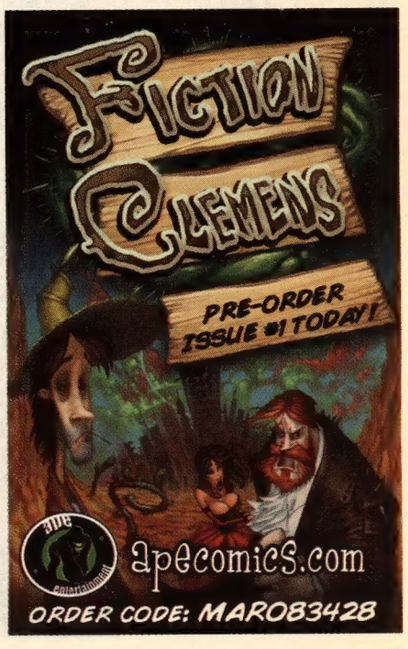
(DC FEB080186 $3.50)

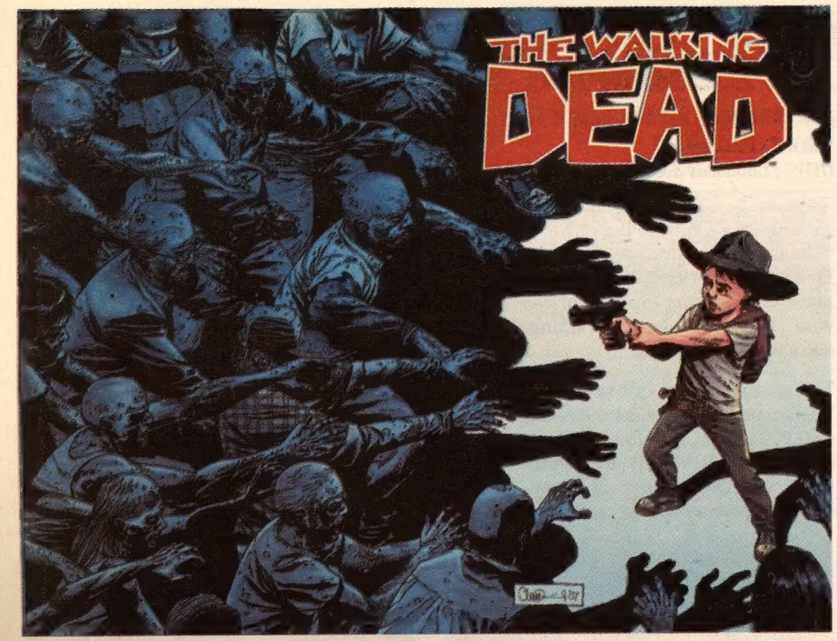
What's the Scoop?

Someone or something is attacking anyone who's ever been a Titan, including Nightwing, Starfire, Red Arrow, Cyborg, Donna Troy, Beast Boy and Raven. Can they survive long enough to find out who's behind the assaults?

Why Should You Care?

Judd Winick & Ethan Van Sciver kick off a new chapter in Titans history with this new ongoing series that features some of the team's most popular members.





Check 'Em Out:
Books You Should Be Reading

AMERICAN SPLENDOR SEASON TWO #1 (OF 4)

(Vertigo/DC FEB080291 $2.99)

Harvey Pekar returns with an all-new series, featuring more stories that demonstrate that every mundane life is filled with tales worth telling.

AQUA LEUNG GN VOL 1

(Image FEB082122 $19.99)

New ongoing graphic novel series by ***Amazing Joy Buzzards*** creator *Mark Andrew Smith* and artist *Paul Maybury* focusing on a young boy from Atlantis who sets out to recover his lost heritage.

JEFFREY BROWN'S LITTLE THINGS: MEMOIR IN SLICES SC

(Touchstone FEB084075 $14.00)

Jeffrey Brown takes a look at the simple beauty of mundane life with this collection of autobiographical short stories done in his distinctive and deceptively simple style.

KLASSIC KOMICS KLUB HC

(Buenaventura FEB083603 $14.95)

Johnny Ryan goes literary with this collection of parodies of more than a hundred classics such as *Homer's* ***Odyssey*** to pseudo-literary wannabees like *Hunter S. Thompson's* ***Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas.***

LOCAL #11 (OF 12)

(Oni FEB083943 $2.99)

Brian Wood & Ryan Kelly focus on an art student trying to find her place in the Toronto arts scene... a scene that seems to have little room for an art student who's approaching thirty.

PIGEONS FROM HELL #1

(Dark Horse FEB080074 $2.99)

Joe R. Lansdale & Nathan Fox adapt *Robert E. Howard's* most effective horror short story in this four-issue miniseries.

PRIMORDIA HC

(Archaia FEB083479 $19.95)

A pair of infants are abandoned in the depths of an ancient forest and adopted by the strange creatures called Woodfolk in this distinctive fantasy tale by *John R. Fultz & Roel Wielinga.*

RAY HARRYHAUSEN'S FLYING SAUCERS VS EARTH #1 (OF 4)

(Bluewater FEB083559 $3.99)

Ray Harryhausen's classic film ***Earth Vs. The Flying Saucers*** is retold—but this time, we see the story from the perspective of the aliens.

WALKING DEAD #50

Robert Kirkman (W); Charlie Adlard & Cliff Rathburn (A)

(Image FEB082109 $2.99)

What's the Scoop?

This special semi-centennial issue features a standalone tale that will both touch and terrify readers of the popular series.

Why Should You Care?

Robert Kirkman's thinking-fan's zombie series is far and away the best of the genre, and this all-access standalone tale offers newcomers an easy way to find out for themselves why *Walking Dead* has become one of Image's best-selling titles.

X-MEN: DIVIDED WE STAND #1 (OF 2)

Mike Carey, Matt Fraction, Craig Kyle, Christopher Yost, & Skottie Young (W); Brandon Peterson, Jamie McKelvie, Sana Takeda, & Skottie Young (A)

(Marvel FEB082260 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

This collection of short stories follows some of Marvel's most popular mutants as they make their way in a world without the X-Men.

Why Should You Care?

The appeal of Marvel's mutants has always been their humanity—and these stories explore the human side of these superhuman beings in a variety of powerful and poignant short tales.

Collected Cool:
April's Best Reprint Volumes

ADAM STRANGE ARCHIVES HC VOL 3
(DC NOV070222 $49.99)

Collects the final Adam Strange stories from ***Mystery in Space #s 81-91, Hawkman #18,*** and ***Strange Adventures #157.*** Space adventure doesn't get any better than this!

COMPLETE CHESTER GOULD'S DICK TRACY HC VOL 4
(IDW FEB083846 $29.99)

Collecting *Chester Gould's* ***Dick Tracy*** strips from July 1936 through January 1938, the period when Gould really began to hit his peak as a comic strip artist and storyteller.

COMPLETE GREEN LAMA FEATURING ART OF MAC RABOY HC
(Dark Horse DEC070067 $49.95)

The first four issues of the legendary Golden Age series are collected in Archives format. Find out why *Mac Raboy* is considered one of the most talented illustrators of the Golden Age in this volume starring the hero currently featured in *Alex Ross's* ***Project Superpowers.***

HELLBOY LIBRARY ED HC VOL 1: SEED OF DESTRUCTION & WAKE THE DEVIL
(Dark Horse DEC070029 $49.95)

The first in a series of definitive ***Hellboy*** volumes collects the first two story arcs (***Seed of Destruction*** and ***Wake the Devil),*** complete with the original introductions by *Robert Bloch* and *Alan Moore* and an expanded sketchbook section.

DC
CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN
GREAT SCOTT! WE'VE BEEN HURTLED INTO THE FUTURE—AND NOW WE HAVE TO FACE THIS INVINCIBLE BEAST OF TOMORROW!
"THE DOOMED WORLD of TOMORROW!"
COSMO,

SHOWCASE CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN TP VOL 2
(DC JAN080209 $16.99)

Collecting the hard-to-find **Challengers of the Unknown #s 18-37,** featuring art by the underappreciated *Bob Brown.*

SHOWCASE PRESENTS LEGION OF SUPER HEROES TP VOL 2
(DC JAN080208 $16.99)

Collecting Legion tales from ***Adventure #316, #322-348, #365, Superboy #117 & #125,*** and ***Superman Annual #4***—the time period when the Legion was comics' pre-eminent teen superteam!

X-O MANOWAR: BIRTH HC
(Valiant FEB084088 $24.95)

This digitally recolored and remastered Valiant special edition collects the full ***X-O Manowar*** origin story from issues #0-6 (with art by *Barry Windsor-Smith)* for the first time ever, and includes an all-new 'The Rise of Lydia' story by *Bob Layton* and a new cover by *Sean Chen*

Hot Commodities:
April's Hottest Merchandising & Collectibles

AME COMI POWER GIRL VINYL FIGURE
(DC Direct SEP070291 $45.00)

AME COMI SUPERGIRL VINYL FIGURE
(DC Direct SEP070292 $45.00)

The latest pair in a series of affordable vinyl statues featuring anime-influenced interpretations of classic DC heroines.

BATMAN 1/2 SCALE BUST
(DC Direct SEP070283 $295.00)

Batman kicks off DC Direct's series of realistic half-sized busts, large enough to impress but small enough to show off in a standard display case.

COMIC BOOK COVER PORTFOLIO #1 WOMEN OF THE DCU
(DC Direct SEP070310 $49.99)

The kickoff entry in a new line of DC cover art portfolios spotlights the work of *Adam Hughes.*

CONAN THE BARBARIAN MODEL KIT
(Moebius FEB084589 $34.99)

Shawn Nagle does the design work on this assemble-it-yourself model kit depicting the most famous barbarian in sword-and-sorcery literature.

UNCLE CREEPY STATUE
(Dark Horse DEC070131 $150.00)

The host of Warren Magazine's most famous horror series enters the third dimension with the release of this statue paving the way for the launch of Dark Horse's ***Creepy Archives*** series this summer.

FYI: Great Additions to Your Reference Library

ART OF MICHAEL WM KALUTA HC
(Desperado FEB083673 $49.99)

Presenting glimpses of previously never-before-seen material from his files and sketchbooks, his enormously popular comic work, art from his career in book publishing and illustrating album covers, as well as beautifully reproduced images of his personal favorites with insights into his life and creative process.

COMICS JOURNAL #290
(Fantagraphics FEB083758 $11.95)

The controversy over last year's *Charles Shulz* biography is the centerpiece of this hefty issue.

KIRBY FIVE OH: 50 YEARS OF KING OF COMICS TP
(TwoMorrows FEB084186 $19.95)

A special look at the best of everything from *Jack Kirby's* fifty-year career in comics—the best comic he did in each of those fifty years, his fifty best unused pieces of art, his fifty best character designs, and much more.

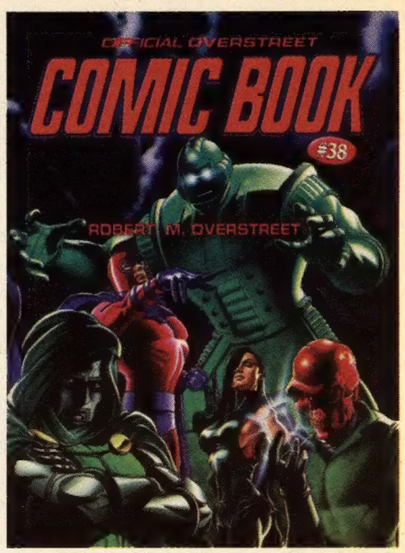
OVERSTREET COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE VOL 38 MARVEL VILLAINS HC
(Gemstone DEC073675 $35.00)

OVERSTREET COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE VOL 38 MARVEL VILLAINS SC
(Gemstone DEC073676 $29.95)

OVERSTREET COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE VOL 38 STAR WARS HC
(Gemstone DEC073677 $35.00)

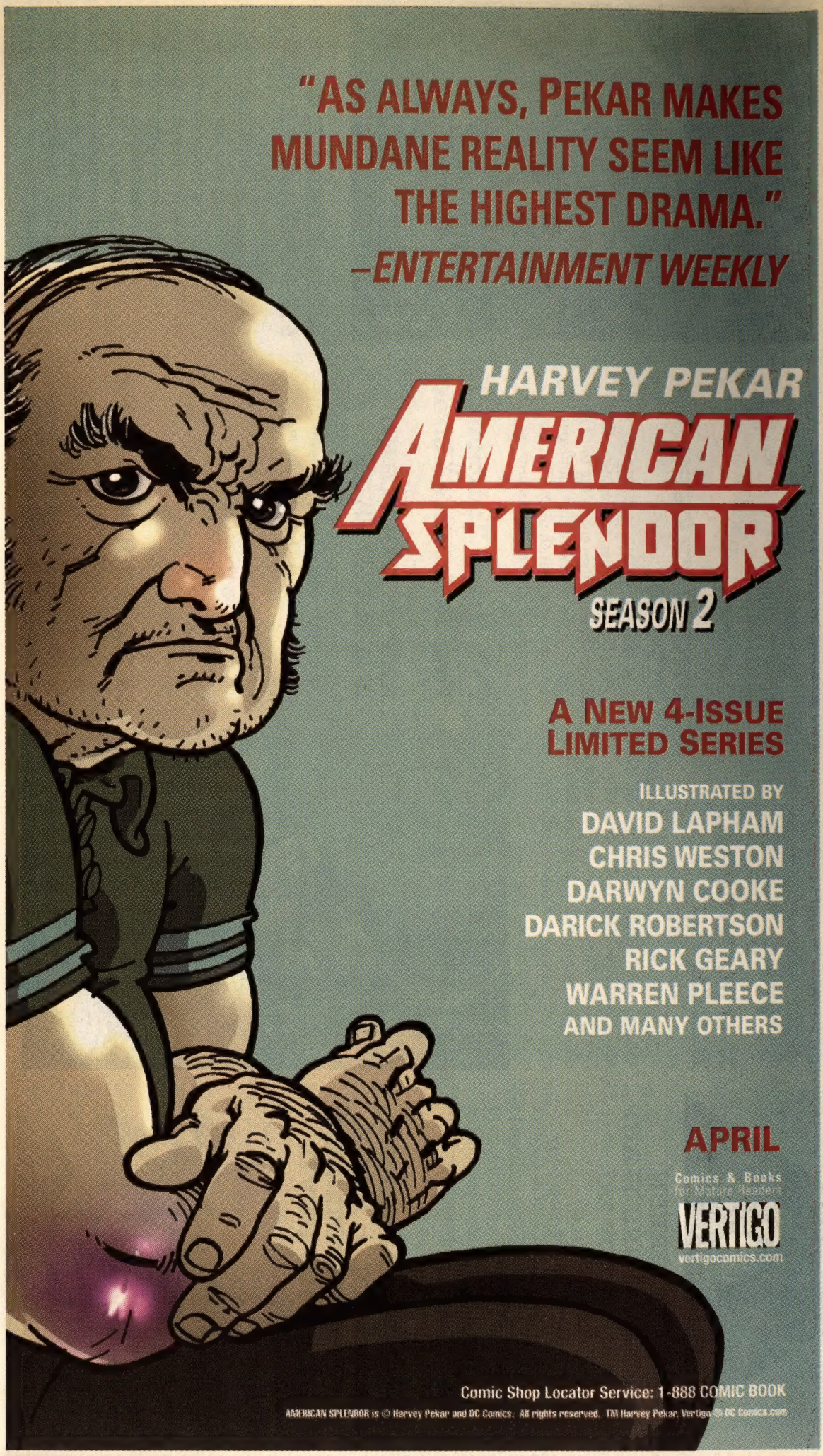
OVERSTREET COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE VOL 38 STAR WARS HC
(Gemstone DEC073678 $29.95)

The essential price guide of comics collecting returns in an all-new edition—and even if you're not interested in the prices, the information regarding publication dates, character appearances, and more make this an essential part of any reference library.



WILL EISNER & PS MAGAZINE SC
(Hermes FEB084258 $29.99)

Paul Fitzgerald offers an insightful look at Will Eisner's twenty-one year run on the magazine that most comics readers never saw. Between the time he ended ***The Spirit*** and the time he launched the graphic novel field with ***A Contract With God,*** Eisner brought his skills to play in the pages of this informative and entertaining military magazine. And Fitzgerald should know the story quite well, since he was the magazine's first managing editor!


"AS ALWAYS, PEKAR MAKES MUNDANE REALITY SEEM LIKE THE HIGHEST DRAMA."
–ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY
HARVEY PEKAR
AMERICAN SPLENDOR
SEASON 2
A NEW 4-ISSUE LIMITED SERIES
ILLUSTRATED BY
DAVID LAPHAM
CHRIS WESTON
DARWYN COOKE
DARICK ROBERTSON
RICK GEARY
WARREN PLEECE
AND MANY OTHERS
APRIL
Comics & Books for Mature Readers
VERTIGO
vertigocomics.com
Comic Shop Locator Service: 1-888 COMIC BOOK
AMERICAN SPLENDOR is © Harvey Pekar and DC Comics. All rights reserved. TM Harvey Pekar, Vertigo © DC Comics.com